

## CLAIMS

1. A search support apparatus comprising:

a search condition registration section that registers object search conditions;

5 a communication section that detects a communication apparatus which exists in a communication area and receives information about the object under the control of said communication apparatus;

a control section that compares the information  
10 about the object received from said communication section with the search conditions registered in said search condition registration section and outputs a control signal for controlling a reporting operation according to said comparison result; and

15 a reporting section that performs a reporting operation according to the control signal output from said control section.

2. A search support apparatus comprising:

20 a search condition registration section that registers object search conditions;

a communication section that detects a communication apparatus which exists in a communication area, receives information about the object under the control of said  
25 communication apparatus and transmits the search conditions registered in said search condition registration section to said communication apparatus;

a control section that compares the information about the object received from said communication section with the search conditions registered in said search condition registration section, transmits said comparison result to said communication apparatus through said communication section, receives the comparison result from said communication apparatus through said communication section and outputs a control signal for controlling a reporting operation according to both the transmitted and received comparison results; and

a reporting section that executes a reporting operation through the control signal output from said control section.

3. The search support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control section measures a distance from said communication apparatus based on the reception intensity of the received signal by said communication section, generates and outputs said control signal according to said measured distance, and said reporting section changes the contents of the reporting operation according to the control signal output from said control section.

4. The search support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reporting section comprises a vibration control section and a vibration section and the vibration

control section changes the intensity or the period of vibration of the vibration section according to the control signal output from said control section.

5 5. The search support apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said reporting section comprises a sound  
information storage section, a sound reproduction section,  
a volume control section and a sound generation section,  
and the sound reproduction section selects sound  
10 information stored in the sound information storage  
section according to the control signal output from said  
control section, outputs a reproduction sound signal and  
volume control signal to the volume control section and  
controls the amount of said reproduced sound generated.  
15

6. The search support apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said reporting section comprises a blink period  
light-emitting intensity control section and a  
light-emitting section, and the blink period  
20 light-emitting intensity control section changes the  
blink period or the light-emitting intensity of the  
light-emitting section according to the control signal  
output from said control section.

25 7. The search support apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein said reporting section comprises an image  
information storage section, an image reproduction

section and a display section, and the image reproduction section selects image information stored in the image storage section according to the control signal output from said control section, outputs an image reproduction  
5 signal to the display section and displays a reproduced image.

8. The search support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said reporting section comprises a smell  
10 information storage section, a smell reproduction section and a fragrance generation section, and the smell reproduction section selects the smell information stored in the smell information storage section according to the control signal output from said control section,  
15 outputs a smell reproduction signal to the fragrance generation section, generates fragrance in the fragrance generation section and changes the amount of said fragrance generated.

20 9. The search support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said search condition registration section registers personal information about the user who uses the apparatus and object information such as characteristics and preferences of the person as search  
25 conditions of said object, and said control section comprises a confirmation section that confirms permission to transmit the personal information registered in said

search condition registration section to said communication apparatus of when both the transmitted and received comparison results match and transmits said personal information to said communication apparatus  
5 through said communication section when the transmission is permitted.

10. The search support apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising an image-pickup section that performs  
10 image pickup in a plurality of image-pickup modes, wherein said control section comprises an image-pickup mode selection section that allows said user to select a desired image-pickup mode, sets the image-pickup mode of said image-pickup section in the selected image-pickup mode  
15 and registers the user's image captured in said search condition registration section as said personal information.

11. A search support method comprising: a search condition  
20 registration step of registering object search conditions; a communication step of detecting a communication apparatus which exists in a communication area and receiving information about the object under the control of said communication apparatus; a control  
25 step of comparing said received information about the object with said registered search conditions and controlling a reporting operation according to said

comparison result; and a reporting step of executing a reporting operation according to said output control signal.

- 5 12. A search support method comprising: a search condition registration step of registering object search conditions; a communication step of detecting a communication apparatus which exists in a communication area, receiving information about the object under the
- 10 control of said communication apparatus and transmitting the search conditions registered in said search condition registration section to said communication apparatus; a control step of comparing said received information about the object with said registered search conditions,
- 15 transmitting said comparison result to said communication apparatus, receiving the comparison result from said communication apparatus and outputting a control signal for controlling a reporting operation according to both the transmitted and received comparison results; and a
- 20 reporting step of executing a reporting operation according to said output control signal.